

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 118357 TOSEC 010120

FOL REPEAT TEHRAN 4788 SENT ACTION SECSTATE SECDEF USCINCEUR
JCS DA USAF AND CNO MAY 21, 1975

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 4788

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, IR

SUBJ: ASSASSINATION OF TWO ARMISH/MAAG OFFICERS

REF: TEHRAN 4768

1. OUR PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF SHAFFER AND TURNER ASSASSINATIONS IS THAT THIS WAS AN ISOLATED ACT DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM EMBARRASSEMENT FOR REGIME ON DAY SHAH RETURNS FROM HEAVILY AND FAVORABLY PUBLICIZED TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES. ASSASSINATIONS WERE ALSO CLEARLY PLANNED TO COINCIDE WITH ANNIVERSARIES OF ATTACKS ON GENERAL PRICE AND LTC HAWKINS. WE ARE TAKING PRECAUTIONS. AN ANONYMOUS FEMALE CALLER TO THE EMBASSY THREE HOURS AFTER THE ASSASSINATIONS, DESCRIBED MURDERS IN FARSI AS FIRST OF NINE PERSONS AMONG HIGH RANKING AMERICAN OFFICIALS WHO ARE TO BE KILLED "AS A PUNISHMENT FOR THE AMERICANS." TELEPHONE CALLER ATTRIBUTED MURDERS TO MOHJAHEDDIN-E-KHALQ ("PEOPLE'S STRUGGLERS"), A FANATICAL MOSLEM GROUP WHICH HAS BEEN LINKED TO SEVERAL ASSASSINATIONS DURING THE PAST YEAR IN ASSOCIATION FREQUENTLY WITH THE
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CHERIKHA-YE-FEDAI-YE-KHALQ ("PEOPLE'S SACRIFICE GUERRILLAS"),

MARXIST GROUP.

2. SINCE MAY 4 TWO MILITARY OFFICERS ASSIGNED TO MLG DETACHMENT HAVE BEEN UNDER SURVEILLANCE BY UNKNOWN PERSONS. SURVEILLANCE DEVELOPED A FIXED PATTERN IN THAT OFFICERS WERE REGULARLY FOLLOWED IN THE EVENING, NEVER IN THE MORNING. A COUNTER CHECK WAS ESTABLISHED WHICH CONFIRMED THE SURVEILLANCE PATTERN. ON DAY BEFORE SHAFFER AND TURNER MURDERS, THE PATTERN WAS BROKEN, I.E., THERE WAS NO INDICATION OF SURVEILLANCE. WE PRESUME THAT SURVEILLANCE OF TWO MLG OFFICERS WAS LINKED TO ASSASSINATIONS, POSSIBLY AS A MOVE TO DECOY US OR AS ALTERNATE TARGETS.

3. AFTER DRAFTING REFTEL WE LEARNED THAT BOOBY-TRAPPED BRIEFCASE WAS LEFT IN VICTIMS' CAR. IT WAS EXPLODED BY POLICE BOMB SQUAD.

4. WE HAVE UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT SAVAK INFORMER WAS ALSO ASSASSINATED AT 06:00 IN SAME GENERAL AREA AS SHAFFER/TURNER ATTACK.

5. ASSASSINATIONS WERE OBVIOUSLY WORK OF PROFESSIONAL MURDERERS AND BEAR CLOSE SIMILARITY TO EARLIER ATTACKS ON IRANIAN OFFICIALS: IT IS PLAIN THAT TERRORIST GROUPS ARE ACQUIRING A GREATER CAPACITY TO EXECUTE ATTACKS ON DESIGNATED TARGETS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THIS INDICATES ANY CHANGE IN PUBLIC SENTIMENTS TOWARDS AMERICAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO IRAN OR AMERICANS IN GENERAL.

6. FOLLOWING MESSAGE JUST RECEIVED BY CONSULAR OFFICER FROM SECOND CALLER WHO SAID, IN BROKEN ENGLISH: QTE THE KILLING OF TWO AMERICANS-THIS WAS WORK OF MOVEMENT MOJAHEDDIN OF IRAN. THIS IS FOR THE FELONS KILLED IN PRISON. SHAH SHOT NINE PERSONS IN PRISON. SHAH IS CRIMINAL. UNQTE. PRESS ANNOUNCED APRIL 20 THAT NINE TERRORISTS IN ESCAPE ATTEMPT WERE SHOT BY GENDARMERIE TROOPS. (REF TEHRAN 4408(NOTAL)). MIKLOS

QUNQUOTE. INGERSOLL

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